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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

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I Do not doubt but it is already obſerved that I write fewer letters to myſelf than any of my predeceſſors. It is not from being leſs acquainted with my own merit, but I really look upon myſelf as ſuperior to ſuch little arts of fame. Compliments, which I ſhould be obliged to ſhroud under the name of a third perſon, have very little reliſh for me. If I am not conſiderable enough to pronounce ex cathedrâ that I Adam Fitz-Adam know how to rally the follies and decide upon the cuſtoms of the world with more wit, humour, learning and taſte than any man living, I have in vain undertaken the ſcheme of this paper. Who would be regulated by the judgment of a man who is not the moſt ſelf-ſufficient perſon alive? Why did all the pretty women in England, in the reign of queen Anne, ſubmit the government of their fans, hoods, hoops and patches to the Spectator, but becauſe he pronounced himſelf the beſt critic in faſhions?

faſhions? Why did half the nation imbibe their politics from the Craftſman, but becauſe Caleb d'Anvers aſſured them that he underſtood the maxims of government and the conſtitution of his country better than any miniſter or patriot of the time? Throned as I am in a perfect good opinion of my own abilities, I ſcorn to taſte the ſatisfaction of praiſe from my own pen—and (to be humble for once) I own, if there is any ſpecies of writing of which I am not perfect maſter, it is the epiſtolary. My deficience in this particular is happily common to me with the greateſt men: I can even go farther, and declare that it is the Fair part of the creation which excells in that province. Eaſe without affectation, the politeſt expreſſion, the happieſt art of telling news or trifles, the moſt engaging turns of ſentiment or paſſion, are frequently found in letters from women, who have lived in a ſphere at all above the vulgar; while on the other ſide, orators write affectedly, miniſters obſcurely, poets floridly, learned men pedantically, and ſoldiers tolerably when they can ſpell. One would not have one's daughter write like Eloiſa, becauſe one would not have one's daughter feel what ſhe felt; yet who ever wrote ſo movingly, ſo to the heart? The amiable madame de Sevignè is the ſtandard of eaſy engaging writing: to call her the pattern of eloquent writing will not be thought an exaggeration, when I refer my readers to her accounts of the death of marſhal Turenne: ſome little fragments of her letters, in the appendix to Ramſay's life of that hero, give a ſtronger picture of him than the hiſtorian was able to do in his voluminous work. If this Fair One's epiſtles are liable to any cenſure, it is for a fault in which ſhe is not likely to be often imitated, the exceſs of tenderneſs for her daughter.

THE Italians are as proud of a perſon of the ſame ſex: Lucretia Gonzaga was ſo celebrated for the eloquence of her letters and the purity of their ſtyle, that

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her very notes to her ſervants were collected and publiſhed. I have never read the collection: one or two billets that I have met with, have not entirely all the delicacy of madame de Sevignè. In one to her footman the ſignora Gonzaga reprehends him for not readily obeying dame Lucy her houſekeeper; and in another addreſſed to the ſame Mrs. Lucy, ſhe ſays, "If Livia will not be obedi-" ent, turn up her coats and whip her till her fleſh be " black and blew, and the blood run down to her heels." To be ſure this ſounds a little oddly to Engliſh ears, but may be very elegant, when modulated by the harmony of Italian liquids.

SEVERAL worthy perſons have laid down rules for the compoſition of letters, but I fear it is an art which only nature can teach. I remember in one of thoſe books (it was written by a German) there was a ſtrict injunction not to mention yourſelf before you had introduced the perſon of your correſpondent; that is, you muſt never uſe the monoſyllable *I* before the pronoun *You*. The Italians have ſtated expreſſions to be uſed to different ranks of men, and know exactly when to ſubſcribe themſelves the devoted or the moſt devoted ſlave of the illuſtrious or moſt eminent perſon to whom they have the honour to write. It is true, in that country they have ſo clogged correſpondence with forms and civilities, that they ſeldom make uſe of their own language, but generally write to one another in French.

AMONG many inſtances of beautiful letters from ladies, and of the contrary from our ſex, I ſhall ſelect two, which are very ſingular in their kind. The compariſon, to be ſure, is not entirely fair; but when I mention ſome particulars of the male author, one might expect a little more elegance, a little better orthography, a little more decorum, and a good deal leſs abſurdity, than ſeem to have met in one head, which had ſeen ſo much

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of the world, which pretended ſo much to literature, and which had worn ſo long one of the firſt crowns in Europe. This perſonage was the emperor Maximilian, grandfather of Charles the Vth. His reign was long, ſometimes ſhining, often unproſperous, very often ignominious. His ficklenefs, prodigality and indigence were notorious. The Italians called him *Pochi-danari*, or the *pennyleſs*; a quality not more habitual to him than his propenſity to repair his ſhattered fortunes by the moſt unbecoming means. He ſerved under our Henry the eighth, as a common ſoldier, at the ſiege of Terouenne for a hundred crowns a day: he was bribed to the attempt againſt Piſa, and bribed to give it over. In ſhort, no potentate ever undertook to engage him in a treaty, without firſt offering him money. Yet this vagabond monarch, as if the annals of his reign were too glorious to be deſcribed by a plebeian pen, or as if they were worthy to be deſcribed at all, took the pains to write his own life in Dutch verſe. There was another book of his compoſition in a different way, which does not reflect much more luſtre upon his memory than his own Dutch epic; this was what he called his *livre rouge*, and was a regiſter of ſeventeen mortifications which he had received from Louis the twelfth of France, and which he intended to revenge on the firſt opportunity. After a variety of ſhifts, breach of promiſes, alliances, and treaties, he almoſt duped his vain cotemporary Henry the eighth, with a propoſal of reſigning the empire to him, while himſelf was meditating, what he thought, an acceſſion of dignity even to the imperial diadem: in ſhort, in the latter part of his life Maximilian took it into his head to canvas for the papal Tiara. Several methods were agitated to compaſs this object of his ambition: one, and not the leaſt ridiculous, was to pretend that the patriarchal dignity was

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included in the imperial; and by virtue of that definition he really aſſumed the title of Pontifex Maximus, copying the pagan lords of Rome on his way to the ſovereignty of the chriſtian church. Money he knew was the ſureſt method, but the leaſt at his command: it was to procure a ſupply of that neceſſary ingredient that he wrote the following letter to his daughter Margaret, ducheſs dowager of Savoy, and governeſs of the Netherlands.

" Tres chiere & tres amèe fylle, jè entendu l'avis que " vous m'avez donnè par Guyllain Pingun notre garde- " robes, dont avons encore mieux pensè. Et ne trouvons " point pour nulle reſun bon que nous nous devons fran- " chement marier, maes avons plus avant mys notre deli- " beration & volontè de jamès plus hanter faem nue. Et en- " voyons demain Monſr. de Gurce Eveſque à Rome devers " le pape pour trouver fachon que nous puyſſiuns accorder " avec ly de nous prendre pour ung coadjuteur, affin que " apres ſa mort pouruns eſtre aſſurè de avoer le papat, & " devenir preſter, & apres eſtre ſaint, & que yl vous ſera " de neceſſitè que apres ma mort vous ſerès contraint de " me adorer, dont je me troverè bien glorioes. Je en- " voye ſur ce ung poſte devers le roy d'Arogon pour ly " prier qu'y nous voulle ayder pour à ce parvenir, dont " il eſt auſſy content, moynant que je reſigne l'empir à " noſtre comun fyls Charls, de ſela auſſy je me ſuys con- " tentè. Je commance auſſy practiker les Cardinaulx, " dont ii C. ou iii C. mylle ducats me ferunt ung grand " ſervice, aveque la partialitè qui eſt deja entre eos. Le " roy d'Arogon à mandè à ſon ambaxadeur que yl veu- " lent favouryſer le papat à nous. Je vous prie, tenès " cette matere empu ſecret, oſſi bien en brieff jours je " creins que yl faut que tout le monde le ſache, car " bien mal eſti poſſible de pratiker ung tel ſy grand ma- " tere ſecretement, pour laquell yl faut avoer de tant de " gens & de argent, ſuccurs & pratike, & a Diù, fact " de la main de votre bon pere Maximilianus futur pape,

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